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AN
APOLOGY
FOR
Mr. T O L A N D,

In a LETTER from Himself to a
Member of the House of Commons
in *Ireland*; written the day before
his Book was resolv'd to be burnt
by the Committee of Religion.

To which is prefix'd a NARRATIVE
containing the Occasion of the
said LETTER.

Dis proximus Ille est
Quem RATIO non IRA movet. Claudian.

L O N D O N;
Printed in the Year MDCXCVII.

07-1618

A NARRATIVE

Containing the Occasion of the following LETTER.

I Promise not to give any account at this time of the Controversy occasion'd by Mr. *TOLAND*'s Book, nor to enter into the Merits of the Cause on either side. His Adversaries seem not yet weary of writing against him; and when they have once done, it will be early enough then for him to reply, if he sees reason so to do: For it would be an endless labour to make *Answers* severally to so many as may concern themselves in this Dispute. My design is only to shew what Treatment he receiv'd from some People in *Ireland*, as far as that may serve to set the *Letter* annex'd to this Narrative in its proper light. And I shall take care to insert nothing, but such notorious matters of Fact that no observing Person in *Dublin*, or I might say perhaps in the Kingdom, can pretend

tend Ignorance concerning them, or deny them to be true.

Mr. TOLAND was scarcely arriv'd in that Country, when he found himself warmly attack'd from the *Pulpit*, which at the beginning could not but startle the People, who till then were equal Strangers to him and his Book; yet they became in a little time so well accustom'd to this Subject, that it was as much expected of course as if it had been prescrib'd in the Rubrick. This occasion'd a Noble Lord to give it for a reason why he frequented not the Church as formerly, that, instead of his Saviour JESUS CHRIST, one JOHN TOLAND was all the Discourse there. But how unworthy a Member soever of the *Christian Religion* Mr. TOLAND may be, he's still so sensible of the Obedience he justly owes to its most Divine Precepts, that he dares not allow himself to make any returns in the same Dialect to what was liberally utter'd against him in that place. We read, an *Archangel* was not permitted to rail against the very *Devil*; and if Mr. TOLAND had not innumerable Passages of the *Gospel* to

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Jude 9.

for MR. TOLAND.

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restrain him, yet the Reverence all Men ow to their own Persons join'd to the Rules of common Civility, would be powerful enough to keep him from bestowing any indecent Expressions or Reflections upon his Opposers. Nor is he such a stranger to the former Ages or the present, as not to perceive that passionate or violent Proceedings never yet gain'd Credit to a Cause; nor produc'd any other Effects upon the Enemies of it, but to make 'em abhor it the more.

But when this rough handling of him in the *Pulpit* (where he could not have word about) prov'd insignificant, the *Grand Jury* was sollicit'd to present him for a Book that was written and publish'd in *England*. And to gain the readier Compliance, the Presentation of the *Grand Jury* of *Middlesex* was printed in *Dublin* with an emphatical Title, and cry'd about the Streets. So Mr. TOLAND was accordingly presented there the last day of the Term in the Court of *King's-Bench*, the *Jurors* not grounding their proceeding upon any particular Passages of his Book, which most of 'em never read, and those that did confess'd not

to understand. Thus in the Reign of HENRY VI. one * JOHN STEPHENS was presented by a Jury in *Southwark*, as a Man, say they, *we know not what to make of him, and that hath Books we know not what they are*. In the mean time those of either Sex who had any intimacy with Mr. TOLAND, or that favour'd him with their familiar Conversation, were branded as his Profelytes, and Lists of their Names industriously given about; altho those worthy Persons (for he always chose the best Company) had never discours'd him of Religion, nor had many of 'em then seen his Book. And so far was he himself from making his Opinions the Subject of his common Talk, that, notwithstanding repeated Provocations, he purposely declin'd speaking of 'em at all; which made his Adversaries (who slipt no handle of decrying him) insinuate that he was not the real Author of the Piece going under his Name. But if they were serious, and this was not another Artifice to make him own it, I would fain know what made them
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* Bacon's *Historical Discourse of the Government of England*, Part 2. cap. 17. pag. 161.

so angry with a Man whom they ought therefore to despise: For if there be any Poison (as I hope there is none) in that Book, the spreading of it in *Ireland* is wholly owing to the Management of those, who would be thought most to oppose it.

We must not forget that in a few days after the present *Lords Justices* of that Kingdom landed, the Recorder of *Dublin*, Mr. HANCOCK, presented Mr. TOLAND to their Excellencies after a very obliging manner; for in his Congratulatory Harangue in the name of his Corporation, whereof by the way he spoke not a word, he begg'd their *Lordsships* would protect the CHURCH from all its Enemies, but particularly from the TOLANDISTS, a Sect, I'm sure, those Noble Persons ne'er heard of before. The late *Lords Justices*, the Earls of *Montrath* and *Drogheda*, were more neglected at least in the same Speech; tho all *Ireland* cannot without the blackest Ingratitude but acknowledg, that they never liv'd before under a more prudent, just, and peaceable Administration: For as they gave no occasions of Complaint in their

Government, so were there no Murmurs against them but only of such, as, through a perpetual desire of Change, are always Enemies to their own and the Country's Happiness. Mr. TOLAND being thus made a *Heresiarch* in so publick a place, where all the Nobility and Gentry of the Kingdom then in Town were present, occasion'd every body to hunt for his Book which was very scarce; and his Enemies also took that Pretext of denominating all his Acquaintance TOLANDISTS, how different soever they were from him or one another in their Sentiments.

From the *Pulpit*, from the *Jury*, and the *Court*, he must take his next turn at the *Press*; from whence there issu'd a Book said to be an Answer to him in particular, and to all others who set up *Reason* and *Evidence* in opposition to *Revelation* and *Mysteries*. This imports that Mr. TOLAND made *Reason* and *Revelation* contradictory. But how well the Author of the said Book, Mr. PETER BROWN, *senior Fellow of Trinity College near Dublin*, has prov'd this or the rest of his Undertaking, is referr'd to the impartial Reader's Judgment.

ment. If hard Language would do instead of strong Arguments, we might easily determine who had the better end of the Controversy; and if you believe Mr. BROWN himself, he assures you that if it can be shewn where one *Link of his reasoning fails, he'll make it up again so firm, that it shall never be undone.* Indeed I don't believe Mr. TOLAND designs to give him any trouble of that kind, so that his *Reasons* are like to continue as good as ever they were. But Mr. BROWN's Book comes now under Consideration as it was one of the Machines invented to render Mr. TOLAND dangerous or odious. And this he does not only by endeavouring all along to prove him a *most inveterate Enemy to all Reveal'd Religion*; but he expressly solicits the Civil Magistrate to take a course with him, which looks not very generous in an *Answerer*, how much concern soever he may pretend for his Faith. In one place he says, *I have no more to do here but to deliver him up into the hands of our Governors. We may confute his Errors, but 'tis they only can suppress his Insolence; we only can endeavour to heal those*

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those already infected, 'tis they alone can hinder the Infection from spreading further. And afterwards he adds, Here again I would deliver him into the hands of the Magistrate, not mov'd by any heat of Passion, but by such a Zeal as becomes every Christian to have for his Religion. I am fully satisfy'd this murdering Zeal is not inspir'd by Genuine Christianity; and as for his want of Passion, the Inquisitors themselves shew as much seeming Reluctance against killing or maiming of those whom they procure to be condemn'd for *Hereticks*. At the very instant they deliver 'em over to the Secular Power, they address themselves to the Magistrate in these terms; *We most earnestly beseech you, my Lord Judge, that for the love of God, and from a sense of Piety and Mercy, as well as out of regard to our Entreaties, you would neither inflict the loss of Life or Limb upon this miserable Creature* *. Tho at the same time, if the Judge should take the

* Domine Judex, rogamus vos cum omni affectu quo possimus, ut amore Dei, pietatis & misericordiae intuitu, & nostrarum interventu precaminum, miserrimo huic nullum mortis vel mutilationis periculum inferatis.

the holy Fathers at their word, they would infallibly excommunicate him for his ready Obedience, whereof they are so fond in all cases but those of *Justice and Clemency*, which is the Motto of their Standard. Here we may observe how strangely Words of a good signification may be detorted to countenance very ill Actions. Thus to abuse a Man is in the Language of some term'd *Zeal*, and so it is to murder him in that of others; nor were the barbarous *Irisb* wanting to sanctify their *Massacre* by that Name.

But lest the broaching of simple *Heresies* should not serve the turn, Mr. TOLAND must by all means be made the *Head of a Sect*, and of no ordinary one; for, if you credit Mr. BROWN, he designs to be *as famous* Pag. 162. *an Impostor as MAHOMET*. To confirm this Character, which was well enough invented to amuse the People with vain Terrors, there was a ridiculous Story handed about, whether true or false God knows; for Mr. TOLAND remembers nothing of the matter. 'Tis said, in short, that about the fourteenth Year of his Age he
gravely

gravely declar'd he would be the Head of a Sect e'er he was Thirty; and before he was forty he should make as great a stir in the Commonwealth as CROMWELL ever did. *Risum teneatis.*

Here's an old Prophecy found in a Bog with a witness, and which Mr. HANCOCK and Mr. BROWN have labour'd to fulfil in part, that superstitious Folks might trepidly apprehend the event of the rest. Mr. BROWN says, *The real*

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design of this Man is plainly no other than what he formerly declar'd, and what he openly affects, to be the Head of a Sect; and doubts not but he has a

Pag. 166.

great deal more to say, whenever this new Sect of his becomes so numerous that they shall outbrave the Laws, and labour for a publick Reformation of the Myste-rious Doctrines of the Gospel. Would any body believe this, did they not see it plainly own'd in Print? Nay he

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tells us that he has trac'd this Heresiarch from the time he first gave out he would be Head of a Sect before he was thirty Tears of Age, till he became an Author, and from thence to his coming into Ireland to spread his Heresies, and put his Design in execution. I assure him he

wants

wants two Years still of Thirty, and if his *Disciples* (as they're call'd) take not other measures than he did to erect that same Sect in *Ireland*, St. PATRICK may securely possess his Apostleship in that Kingdom till Doomsday, which is an Honour Mr. TOLAND does not envy him. I ought not by any means to forget here the Sagacity of a certain Gentleman, who wonder'd at his Impudence for presuming to set up a *new Religion* in their Country, where he had not a foot of Land; which inclines me to believe he has met with better Records of the Apostles Possessions than Mr. TOLAND could in all his reading.

Well then, if all this wo'nt do, what shall we make of him next? He must e'en be represented as dangerous to the Government; and truly so he's like to be if *Irish* Presages hold good, for their Prophecies were never worth a farthing. *How far Men in power, says* Pag. 172. Mr. BROWN, according to their several Stations, are oblig'd to intermeddle in point of Conscience, I shall not now enquire. But sure I am in point of Policy it is become no less than necessary: for the Writers of
this

*this strain have given broad hints that they are as little friends to our Government, as our Religion. This Man can say that MAGISTRATES are made for the PEOPLE, and every one knows what Doctrines of REBELLION Men are wont to insinuate by this SAYING. O! is it thereabouts then? Why truly, the Doctrine of Passive Obedience was exploded by this same Saying, which Mr. TOLAND acknowledges to be one fair Quotation. JAMES the Second was justly abdicated according to this Saying, because he was an Enemy to the People for whom he was made a King; and our most Glorious Hero WILLIAM the Third, the Restorer of Universal Peace and Liberty, was invested with the Supreme Power by the honest People of Great Britain, for whose good he has indefatigably employ'd it ever since, in vindicating, settling, and enlarging their Civil and Religious Rights. Mr. BROWN has been pleas'd to say that Mr. TOLAND was proud of running down three Kingdoms with one cross Question, which is, *How can a Man believe what he does not know?* and he that does so, knows not what he believes.*

lieves. Now I would gladly be resolv'd by him; for whom the *Magistrates* are made unless for the *People*? Were they made for themselves? or whether the *People* were made for the *Magistrates*? But he adds, *that this* Pag. 172.
sort of Men deserve to be look'd to, that their numbers grow formidable; and makes little doubt but their design is at length to shew us, That all Dominion as Pag. 173.
well as Religion is founded in Reason. Let him assure himself they will never begin to shew that, for they have clearly prov'd it long ago. What Dominion is not founded in Reason, must be doubtless unreasonable, and consequently Tyrannical. There was nothing more reasonable than for Men first to unite themselves into Societies for their mutual Peace and Security against the Violence or Fraud of others. And as reasonable it was that they should agree upon certain Rules, or frame Constitutions which were to be the known Standard of every bodies Actions, and might serve for the Decision of all their Differences. That there should be Magistrates or indifferent Persons appointed to preserve those
Laws,

Laws, and see 'em put in execution (not leaving every Man to be his own Judg) is not less reasonable still. And that all due Honour and Obedience should be paid to those Governors by their Subjects, is likewise most highly reasonable; so that I fancy we must necessarily conclude *all just Dominion to be founded in Reason.*

At length comes from the North a finish'd Master of such Politicks, and he doubts not but Mr. TOLAND after all is a *Jesuit*. But his Book utterly destroys all the Principles of *Popery* and *Superstition*. That's nothing; for *Jesuits* to unsettle us will preach against their own Religion. Now if Mr. TOLAND be a *Jesuit*, he's certainly the most dangerous of the Order, and begun extremely betimes. He was not sixteen Years old when he became as zealous against *Popery* as he has ever since continu'd, and by God's Assistance always will do. From *Redcastle* near *Londonderry* he went in 1687. to the College of *Glasco* in *Scotland*; and upon his departure from it the Magistrates of that City gave him Recommendatory Letters, wherein they took particular notice

notice of his Affection to the *Protestant Religion*. The day before the memorable Battle of the *BOINE*, he was created *Master of Arts* at *Edenburgh*, and receiv'd the usual *Diploma* or Certificate from the *Professors*. Then he came into *England*; and liv'd in as good *Protestant* Families as any in the Kingdom, till he went to the famous University of *Leyden* in *HOLLAND* to perfect his Studies; and upon his return from thence lodg'd in a private House at *Oxford* till about two Years ago he came to *London*, where, 'tis well known, his Company and Conversation were the farthest in the World from being *Jesuitical*. Notwithstanding the whole series of his Education, as well as his own Genius, did thus run in the most opposite Channel to *Popery*; yet in *Ireland* that malicious Report gain'd upon some few, because his Relations were *Papists*, and that he happen'd to be so brought up himself in his Childhood, which was no more an Action of his own, than that he was born there. So his Countrymen treated him in this respect like his Majesty's good Subjects of *Guernsey*, who, when they are

in *France* are call'd English Rogues, and in *England* French Dogs.

The last Effort, except the charge of *Socinianism*, to blast him, was to make him pass for a rigid *Nonconformist*. Mr. TOLAND will never deny but the real Simplicity of the *Dissenters* Worship, and the seeming Equity of their Discipline (into which being so young he could not distinctly penetrate) did gain extraordinarily upon his Affections, just as he was newly deliver'd from the insupportable Yoke of the most pompous and Tyrannical *Policy* that ever enslav'd Mankind under the name or shew of *Religion*. But when greater Experience and more Years had a little ripen'd his Judgment, he easily perceiv'd that the Differences were not so wide as to appear irreconcilable, or at least, that Men, who were sound *Protestants* on both sides, should barbarously cut one anothers Throats, or indeed give any disturbance to the Society about them. And as soon as he understood the late Heats and Animosities did not totally (if at all) proceed from a Concern for meer Religion, he allow'd himself a latitude in several

† things,

things, that would have been matter of scruple to him before. His Travels increas'd, and the Study of Ecclesiastical History perfected this Disposition, wherein he continues to this hour: for, whatever his own Opinion of those Differences be, yet he finds so essential an Agreement between the *French, Dutch, English, Scottish*, and other *Protestants*, that he's resolv'd never to lose the benefit of an Instructive Discourse in any of their Churches upon that score; and it must be a Civil not a Religious Interest that can engage him against any of these Parties, not thinking all their private Notions wherein they disagree worth endangering, much less subverting, the Publick Peace of a Nation. If this makes a Man a *Nonconformist*, then Mr. TOLAND is one unquestionably. And so he is, if he thinks the *Dissenters* ought not to be molested in their Goods or Persons, nor excluded from any of their Native Rights, because they have a different Set of Thoughts from him or others; so long as none of their Principles are repugnant to good Government. He believes them likewise to be a true and

considerable part of the *Protestant Religion* (for they have demonstrated themselves to be stanch *Patriots*) notwithstanding any Error or Weakness whereof they may be guilty in his Judgment. But this same reason will prove him as found a Member of the establish'd Church of *England*; being perswaded the narrow Sentiments of a few about *Communion* is not any profest Doctrin of that Church: nor would there be any Separation from it in this Realm, were all others of his mind. 'Tis visible this Declaration is not made to curry favour with one (as many do) while in their Hearts they are devoted to the other side. But Mr. TOLAND's Opinion being frequently demanded as to this Point, he now delivers it once for all; for he will never condescend to court any body of Men with preference to all others, further than he sees ground for it: and to this, as his settl'd Judgment, he's resolv'd to adhere, tho it should hazard the inevitable ruin of his Fortune or Reputation with all Parties.

Atheism is now become so common an Accusation in every Person's mouth,

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who is displeas'd at the Rudeness of others for not complimenting him with their Assent to his Opinions, that, altho in it self it be the most atrocious and unnatural Crime whereof a reasonable Creature can be guilty, yet is it not otherwise minded than as a word of course which indicates a world of Inconsiderateness and Rancor. When Mr. T O L A N D us'd to be traduc'd in *Ireland* for *Deism* with many other Opinions, and his Friends demanded of his Accusers where they made those Discoveries in his Writings, the ready Answer always was, that truly they had never read the Book, and by the Grace of God never would; but that they receiv'd their Information from such as were proper Judges of the thing. O how inseparable is *Popery* from *Ignorance*! And what is the source of all *Popery*, but *Implicit Belief* where-ever it is found? As to what the Author of the Letter to a Convocation-man says of a Congregation *de propaganda Infidelitate*, no body needs be asham'd of so good Company as the present Bishop of *Salisbury*, the late Archbishop of *Canterbury*, and the *Commons* of *Eng-*

land themselves, whom he not only libels with most false and vile Insinuations, but even his Majesty's own Person as a Prince of no Religion, which none that had any Religion durst say of a King who is so great a friend to it by his Patronage and Example. Mr. TOLAND was once writing an Answer to this Author; but he laid aside his Papers when he understood that such able Men had undertaken him, as the Reverend Dr. WAKE, and the Ingenious Author of the Letter to a Parliament Man.

But some People not being satisfy'd, it seems, with all that past, and thinking Mr. TOLAND should never have enough on't, concluded at last to bring his Book before the *Parliament*. And therefore on Saturday the 14th day of *August*, it was mov'd in the *Committee of Religion*, that the Book entitul'd *Christianity not Mystrious*, should be brought before them, and accordingly it was order'd that the said Book should the Saturday following be brought into the *Committee*. That day the Committee sat not; but the next Saturday, which was the 28th day of

of *August*, there met a very full *Committee*, wherein this business was a great while debated. Several Persons eminent for their Birth, good Qualities, or Fortunes, oppos'd the whole Proceeding, being of opinion it was neither proper nor convenient for them to meddle with a thing of that nature. But when this Point was without much Argument carri'd against them, they insisted that the Passages which gave Offence in the Book should be read; so those wonderful Objections were made which are clear'd in the *Letter* subjoin'd: and then the *Committee* was adjourn'd till the 4th of *September*. That day, after several Gentlemen had spoke to those Objections, they urg'd at last, according to Mr. TOLAND's own desire, that he should be call'd to answer in Person, to declare the Sense of his Book, and his Design in writing it. But this favour being peremptorily deny'd, an *Honourable Member* went to the Bar, and offer'd a *Letter* to be read which he had receiv'd that Morning from Mr. TOLAND, containing what Satisfaction he intended to give the *Committee*, had they thought

fit to let him speak for himself. But this was likewise refus'd, and the Committee came immediately to those Resolutions, to which the House agreed after some Debate on Thursday following being the 9th of September, viz.

Votes of
the H. of
C. of Ire-
land.

That the Book entitul'd Christianity not Mysterious, containing several Heretical Doctrines contrary to the Christian Religion and the establish'd Church of Ireland, be publickly burnt by the hands of the Common Hangman. Likewise, That the Author thereof JOHN TOLAND be taken into the Custody of the Serjeant at Arms (which he took care to prevent) and be prosecuted by Mr. Attorney General for writing and publishing the said Book. They order'd too that an Address should be made to the Lords Justices to give Directions that no more Copies of that Book be brought into the Kingdom, and to prevent the selling of those already imported. Their Sentence was executed on the Book the Saturday following, which was the 11th of September, before the Parliament-House Gate, and also in the open Street before the Town-house; the Sheriffs and all the Constables attending.

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One very singular Passage we must not omit, which is, that the same day the Book was to be condemn'd there came abroad a printed Sheet, wherein, to terrify any body from appearing publickly for Mr. TOLAND, were contain'd the following words: *Now let those consider this*, says the Writer of that Paper, *whether within doors or without; and whether the Vindication or even the excusing this Book or the Author, or the ridiculing or otherwise baffling the just Prosecution or Censure of it and him, be not truly the denying of our Saviour before Men; and whether such may not assuredly expect to be deny'd of him in the presence of his Father, and the holy Angels, and all the World at the last day.* This strange Denunciation had no effect upon those who all along appear'd in Mr. TOLAND's behalf, tho much out-number'd by those of the contrary Opinion. In the Committee it was mov'd by one that Mr. TOLAND himself should be burnt, as by another that he should be made to burn his Book with his own hands; and a third desir'd it should be done before the Door of the House, that he might have the pleasure

A Letter
upon Mr.
Toland's
Book to
J. C. Esq;
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sure of treading the Ashes under his feet.

I forbear making any Remarks here either upon the design of burning Books in general, or this in particular; nor will I shew, as well I might, how fruitless this sort of proceeding has prov'd in all Ages, since the Custom was first introduc'd by the *Popish Inquisitors*, who perform'd that Execution on the Book when they could not seize the Author whom they had destin'd to the Flames. Neither will I insist upon the great Stop and Discouragement which this Practice brings to all Learning and Discoveries; but, without further Digression, I shall now leave the Reader to peruse Mr. TOLAND'S *Letter*, and to judg for himself whether it would have given him satisfaction, had he been a Member of the *House of Commons*.

Mr.

Mr. TOLAND'S Letter to a Member of the House of Commons in IRELAND, &c.

Dublin, Septemb. 3. 1697.

S I R,

WHEN the *Christian Religion* is attack'd by Atheists and others, they constantly charge it with *Contradiction* or *Obscurity*; and Mr. TOLAND'S design in the Publication of his Book was to defend *Christianity* from such unjust Imputations, as he more than once declares in his Preface, and as he thinks it every Christian's Duty to do, according to his Ability or Opportunity. If we might judge of his Performance by his profest Intentions, we should conclude it to be extraordinary good; but we must on the other hand reckon it as bad, if, without further Examination, we regard the strange Out-cries that are made

made againſt it both from the *Pulpit* and the *Preſs*. That a Man ſhould be run down becauſe it is the faſhion, or by *Inter-eſted* Perſons, and ſuch as are influenc'd by 'em, is nothing ſtrange; for one way or other the like happens every day: but that a Book ſhould be condemn'd by wholeſale, without aſſigning the particular Faults or Miſtakes in it, and by many that never read it, is viſibly unjuſt. What has contributed to make Mr. TOLAND (whom neither his Age, nor Fortune, nor Preferment renders formidable) the Object of ſo much Heat and Noiſe, and after what manner his Enemies of all ſorts have treated him under a zealous pretence, he's like very ſpeedily to inform ſuch of the World as will pleaſe to concern themſelves. But not conſidering the Honourable *House of Commons*, or your ſelf in particular, among the number of his *Adverſaries* but as his *Judges*, he thinks convenient to clear thoſe few Points which are reported to afford matter of Exception to ſome in the *Committee of Religion*. But, before this be done, he deſires that two or three Particulars may be a little conſider'd.

Mr.

Mr. TOLAND, in the first place, is of opinion it portends much Happiness to the Nation, that the *Commons* (who have all the right imaginable to it) should take the cognizance of such things into their own Hands. And tho his Book should, as it's very probable, happen to fall under their Censure, yet his love to Mankind cannot but make him extremely pleas'd with the Consequences he foresees must necessarily follow from such an authentick Precedent in this Country, where it was most peculiarly wanting. Nor does he think it more reasonable for him to be angry at his private ill luck, than it would be for some to be out of love with *Parliaments* themselves (which is the best Constitution in the Universe) because they are *mistaken* sometimes, and that an Act is *repeal'd* in one Session which was establish'd in another; not considering that such an Inconvenience is infinitely overbalanced by several excellent Laws, and by the Remedy that may likewise be had to this pretended Disorder from that very Court, upon better *Information* or *Temper*.

Secondly,

Secondly, Mr. TOLAND does not complain that he alone in the Kingdom is disturb'd for his Opinion, but is heartily glad that no more are trouble'd upon that account. For as he takes *Persecution* to be one of the chief Marks and Pillars of the *Antichristian Church*, so he looks upon an impartial *Liberty* of writing and speaking whatever is not destructive of *Civil Society*, to be the greatest advantage of any Country, whether the Learning, or the Commerce, or the very Peace and Tranquillity thereof be consider'd.

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the Original
Copy.

“ Yet it cannot but look mighty oddly
“ to indifferent Persons, that all the
“ *Dissenters* from the Establish'd
“ Church, that the *Papists* who per-
“ vert Christianity it self, that several
“ declar'd *Socinian*, ay and *Jacobite*
“ Pamphlets should escape the burning
“ Zeal of those, who so furiously pro-
“ secute one young Man only for the
“ suspected Consequences of his Book,
“ as if the very Being or Destruction
“ of all *Religion* depended upon the
“ fate of him, or his Writings.

Thirdly, As for the *Errors* commonly laid to Mr. TOLAND'S charge,
they

they are so various and inconsistent with one another, that no Man of ordinary sense could possibly hold them all at a time; and being credited by his Enemies without book, he may with more Justice deny than they can affirm them. He's not therefore oblig'd to take notice of any thing but what is alledg'd in formal words, or plainly infer'd from his Book. Indeed some Consequences an Author might not perceive, which should render him the more excusable; but Mr. TOLAND confesses he foresaw several Consequences of his Book, even to part of the Opposition with which it has met, tho not that (after the Pulpits, Presses, and Juries) the *Commons* of *Ireland* should likewise honour it with their Animadversion.

Now what is said to have been objected in the *Committee* is, First, That the very Title *CHRISTIANITY NOT MYSTERIOUS* is Heretical. Whether the Committee decrees a new or declares an old *Heresy*, Mr. TOLAND neither knows nor is much concern'd to understand, being conscious to himself of neither. If the

Title

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the Original
Copy.

Title be made good in the Book, 'tis orthodox or sound enough; and if not; yet he's still to seek for the *Heresy* of it. If it be an old Opinion, others would gladly be inform'd in which Century it was first taught, who the Author of it might be, or by what Council it was condemn'd: and if it be a new Notion, they desire likewise to know whether the *House of Commons* alone can decree it *Heresy*, being yet perfect strangers to any such Power claim'd by that Honourable Body. But 'tis affirm'd that by his *Title* he rejects the *Mysteries* of the Gospel. If by *Mysteries* be meant the *Doctrines* themselves, he denies none of them; but that after Revelation they are not *mysterious* or obscure, he still maintains for the Honour of *Christianity*. A great many without doors very wisely conclude that he believes not the *Doctrines*, because he thinks they are *plain*, and therefore the more *credible*; for that's all he means by *not mysterious*. But some People, otherwise credulous enough, believe no body capable of rendering that clear and easy, which to themselves seems difficult or insuperable. It

It was likewise objected that he makes a doubt whether the *Scriptures* be of Divine Authority. That bare Expression, *If the Gospel be really the Word of God*, imports no such matter; but very frequently the contrary; as for example, *If the Gospel be true this frame of the World shall be dissolv'd*, which is not to question, but more emphatically to assert the truth of the Proposition. But this, I confess, is nothing to the case before us. The words in the Conclusion of the Book are these, *Nothing con-* Pag. 170.
tradictory or inconceivable, however made an Article of Faith, can be contain'd in the Gospel, if it be really the Word of God: for I have hitherto argu'd only upon this Supposition, for the Reason to be seen towards the end of the Preface. The sense of the words then must be determin'd by that Reason; and the Passage referr'd to in the Preface is this, *viz. In the following Discourse which is the first* Pref. p. 24.
of three, &c. the Divinity of the New Testament is taken for granted. In the next Discourse, &c. I attempt a particular and rational Explanation of the reputed Mysteries of the Gospel. And in the third, I demonstrate the Verity of

Divine Revelation against Atheists and all Enemies of Reveal'd Religion. Now is it not something strange that a Man should question what he takes for granted, and which the Method he follow'd would not permit him to prove before his time, that is, not form the Conclusion before the Premisses? In one place he positively affirms the

Pag. 33. *Scriptures to contain the brightest Characters of Divinity; but that the force of Calumny may evidently appear, let this other Passage of the same Book*

Pag. 46. *be consider'd: What we discours'd of Reason before, says he, and Revelation now being duly weigh'd, all the Doctrines and Precepts of the New Testament (if it be indeed Divine) must consequently agree with Natural Reason and our own ordinary Ideas. THIS every considerate and well-dispos'd Person will find by the careful perusal of it, and whoever undertakes this Task will confess the Gospel not to be HIDDEN from us, nor afar off; but very nigh us in our Mouths and in our HEARTS. But this whole Chapter must have been transcrib'd, were all that's to our purpose in it to be nicely quoted; for every word of it from*

N^o 22. to the end, is a Justification of the Method and Stile of the *New Testament*. Yet lest any suspicion of Fallacy might remain where the Particle *IF* occurs, I demand what Declaration can be conceiv'd in stronger terms than the following Passage? for you shall be troubl'd with no more, tho I might easily cite forty others relating to this Head. The words are, *Whether or no Christianity is mysterious* Pag. 88. *ought to be naturally decided by the New Testament, wherein the Christian Faith is originally contain'd. I heartily desire to put the Case upon this Issue, I appeal to this Tribunal; for did I not infinitely prefer the Truth I learn from these sacred Records to all other Considerations, I should never assert that there are no Mysteries in Christianity. The Scriptures have engag'd me in this Error, if it be one; and I will sooner be reputed Heterodox with these only on my side, than to pass for Orthodox with the whole World, and have them against me.*

It was likewise objected that Mr. TOLAND shew'd not a due Respect to CHRIST, because he always styles him in his Book barely CHRIST, or

At most only JESUS CHRIST. If this
 be any Disrespect, the most Orthodox
 Divines are as guilty of it in their Writ-
 ings; and the *Apostles* themselves speak
 of him without any additional Titles a
 great many times in the Gospel. 'Tis
 otherwise, I grant, when some special
 occasion requires them to be more ex-
 press; and when Mr. TOLAND was
 declaring the Head of his Church, he
ref. p. 26. says, *I am neither of Paul, nor of Cé-*
phas, nor of Apollos, but of the Lord
JESUS CHRIST alone, who is the Au-
thor and Finisher of my Faith. And
 here I cannot forbear admiring how
 Mr. TOLAND should be deem'd an
Arian or *Socinian*, seeing, for ought ap-
 pears in his Book, he may lay a better
 Claim to any other Sect, except the
Papists, than to them; for these three
 are the only Parties he opposes by
 name. But if his Religion is to be re-
 ally discover'd by his Book, 'tis utterly
 impossible he should be either an *Arian*
 or *Socinian*. They both of 'em (from
 different Notions) believe JESUS
 CHRIST to be a meer Creature
 God, which Mr. TOLAND does not;
 and, to mend one Absurdity by a
 † greater,

for Mr. TOLAND.

greater, they join in paying their Dignify'd Creature Divine Worship, which Mr. TOLAND judges impious and ridiculous. His own words are these: *Tho the Socinians disown this Practice* (of admitting Contradictions in Religion) *I am mistaken if either they or the Arians can make their Notions of a Dignify'd and Creature God capable of Divine Worship, appear more reasonable than the extravagancies of other Sects touching the Article of the Trinity; such as the Whimfies of EUTTCHEs, GENTILIS, and the rest.* In short, Mr. TOLAND had no natural occasion to declare his Sentiments relating to CHRIST's Person, that and the other particular Doctrines of the Gospel being the Subject of the second and third Books he promises, and by which alone his Conformity or Dissent with the *Common Christianity* is to be discern'd. Nor had his Adversaries from the Press run into so many gross Mistakes, and been at the trouble of several no less unhappy than needless Conjectures, had they but Patience or Phlegm enough to attend the Publication of those Pieces.

It was objected also that he slighted the *Sacraments* (which is a term he never uses) by making them bare *Ceremonies*. That he call'd 'em any where meer *Ceremonies* he absolutely denies, tho he now affirms with all Christians, that the Actions of *breaking Bread* and *washing with Water* are as much Ceremonial under the *New Testament*, as *Circumcision* or the *Passover* were under the *Old*. But when Mr. TOLAND had a just occasion to mention the *Sacraments*, tho not to declare his Opinion concerning their Nature or Efficacy, 'tis evident he speaks there of those numerous *Ceremonies* of Human Institution which were added to 'em by the mistaken Zeal or Prudence of the Primitive Christians, who, as he says, *not having the least Precedent for any Ceremonies from the Gospel, excepting Baptism and the Supper, strangely disguis'd and transform'd these by adding to them the Pagan Mystick Rites*; and of these appending Ceremonies he gives a large Catalogue in that Chapter. But he's so far from making any comparison between *Christianity* and the *Orgies* of BACCHUS, as was likewise alledg'd, that

that on the contrary he severely handles those who blended such Corruptions with pure Christianity. Thus, says he, *Page. 153.*
lest Simplicity, the noblest Ornament of the Truth, should expose it to the Contempt of Unbelievers, Christianity was put upon an equal level with the Mysteries of CERES, or the Orgies of BACCHUS.
 To this may be added another Passage, where he affirms *he could draw his Parallel between Heathenism and those early Superstitions much larger, to shew how Christianity became mysterious, and how so Divine an Institution did, through the Craft and Ambition of Priests and Philosophers, degenerate into meer Paganism.* *Page. 162, 163.*
 Here, you see, 'tis not the *Christian Religion*, but the unwarrantable *Additions* to it, wherein JESUS CHRIST never had any hand, which he compares with the *Mysteries of CERES and the Orgies of BACCHUS.* And what, pray, is the main body of the *Popish, Eastern, or other Superstitions*, but the continuance of those Rites of *Heathen or Jewish Original* which Mr. TOLAND justly explodes? Or is any body that draws a Parallel between *Heathenism and Popery* thought disaffected to

Christianity? Indeed *protest* or *disguis'd Papists* will accuse him of such a Crime, but no *understanding Protestant* can ever be guilty of so much Weakness.

'Tis possible more Exceptions were made to Mr. TOLAND'S Book in the *Committee*, or these not all in this Order; but these were all whereof he could inform himself, and of which he gives the most compendious and satisfactory account he can: being as ready to do the same in relation to all other Objections that shall fairly come to his knowledg. The greatest Hardship he complains of is, that, being an Inhabitant of *England*, he should be molested in *Ireland* (where he was only fortuitously born) for a Book he publish'd in another Country. His Errand hither, God knows, was neither to propagate nor receive any Doctrines, new or old; and as he was far from ever designing to fix his constant Residence here, so he thinks himself liable to be disturb'd in any other place, whither his Curiosity or Business may lead him, as in this Kingdom; which is a way of proceeding hitherto unheard of in the World.

for Mr. TOLAND.

41

World. I shall give you no further trouble when I have told you, that I resolve always to continue an unalterable Friend to *Liberty*, an Advocate for *Religion* without Superstition, a true Lover of my *Country*, and in particular, Sir, your most humble Servant,

JOHN TOLAND.

There was enough said in the preceding *Letter* concerning the *Socinianism* laid to Mr. TOLAND'S Charge, and I doubt very much whether now there be any *Socinians* in *England*; I am sure, no considerable Body of them: for the Theology of the *Unitarians*, who vulgarly pass under that name, is very different from that of SOCINUS. But these *Unitarians* in one of their latest Prints disown any Service intended their Cause by Mr. TOLAND'S Book; and all Sects, we know, are ready upon the least apparent Conformity to augment their

their own Numbers, especially with such as they seem to value for their Learning or other Qualifications. In *The Agreement of the Unitarians with the Catholick Church* occurs the following

P. 54, 55. Paragraph. "The (Bishop of Worcester's) eighth and tenth Chapters, "are employ'd in opposing, and, as "he thinks, in exposing and ridiculing "some Interpretations of a few Texts "of Scripture by the *Unitarians*; and "attacking a few Paragraphs in "Mr. TOLAND'S Book, *Christianity not Mysterious*. I know not what it "was to his Lordship's purpose to fall "upon Mr. TOLAND'S Book. But "if he would needs attack the Book, "he should have dealt fairly. He "should have discuss'd the main Argument in it, and not carpt only at "a few Passages; and those too so "mangl'd and deform'd by his Representation of them, that I dare to "affirm Mr. TOLAND does not know "his own Book in the Bishop's Representation of it. I do not perceive, "to speak truly, but that Book still "stands in its full strength; if it has "not also acquir'd a farther Reputation,

"tion, by occasion of this so unsuc-
 "cessful nibbling at it. But suppose
 "the *Bishop* had disarm'd the *Gentle-*
 "man, what is that to us? Do we offer
 "this Book against the *Trinity* of the
 "Realists? Was it written with *Inten-*
 "tion to serve us? Does it contain any
 "of our *Allegations* from Reason, against
 "the *Trinity* of *Philoponus*, *Joachim*,
 "and *Gentilis*? We desire him to an-
 "swer to the Reasons in our own
 "Books against the *Trinity* of the *Tri-*
 "theists. But to these he says not a
 "word, but only falls upon Mr. TO-
 "LAND'S Book; in which, or for which
 "we are not in the least concern'd. Nor
 "do I think the Learned and Inge-
 "nious Author will hold himself to be
 "interested to defend that *Christianity*
 "not *Mysterious* with which his Lord-
 "ship presents us. So far that cele-
 "brated *Unitarian*.

A good Temper and sound Judgment
 usually go together, and if the absence
 of the former be no Demonstration
 that the latter is also wanting, yet
 questionless it creates a very reasonable
 suspicion of it; for a bad Cause is ge-
 nerally supported by Violence and ill
 Arts,

Arts, while TRUTH establishes it self only by Lenity and Perswasion. This is so certain that when an undiscerning Person happens to be engag'd on the right side, and employs Force or Calumny in its defence, we always find he does it infinitely more harm than good. That such as receive Gain or Honour by any thing should oppose those who go about to destroy it, tho with design to introduce a better in the room of it, is no great wonder tho it be manifestly unjust. Thus the Silversmiths of *Ephesus* headed by DEMETRIUS rais'd a mighty Tumult against the Apostle PAUL for ruining their Trade, which was solely maintain'd by Lies and Impostures at the expence of the Peoples Credulity. The *Primitive Christians* were represented by the *Heathen Priests* as Atheistical, Rebellious, Incestuous, and in a word, polluted with all manner of Wickedness and Impiety; by which nefarious Artifices they procur'd those innocent Persons to be cruelly persecuted with Infamy, Confiscation, and Death it self in all its shapes. The *Waldenses*, *Wicclifists*, *Hussites*, and the first

first *Reformers* were treated after the same manner by the Church of *Rome*; and when they could not seize their Persons, they never fail'd to load 'em with horrid, black, and monstrous Aspersions, that they might not be wanting to prejudice 'em all manner of ways, as if this had been the very Method prescrib'd in the *Gospel* to reduce the Erroneous. Thus we read such accounts of LUTHER and CALVIN'S Lives publish'd by the *Monks* of those Times, as paint 'em worse than Devils, and that make their Doctrine as different from what we know it to be, as the Historians were from telling Truth.

I am sorry to observe among us any Remains of that implacable and bitter Spirit, tho such as distinguish themselves by their eminent Vertues retain no tincture of so mean and base a Disposition. The Character which that most excellent Person the late *Archbishop* of *Canterbury* has left on Record of the *Socinians* (when he was strenuously arguing against their Opinions) ought to be a Model which no body should be asham'd to imitate. He did

Four Serm.
against the
Socin.

P. 57, 58.

did not think to lessen his own Reputation, or to hurt his Cause, when he frankly acknowledg'd them to be a Pattern of the fair way of disputing, and debating matters of Religion without Heat and unseemly Reflections upon their Adversaries. They generally argue matters with that Temper and Gravity, says he, and with that freedom from Passion and Transport which becomes a serious and weighty Argument: and for the most part they reason closely and clearly, with extraordinary guard and caution, with great dexterity and decency; and yet with smartness and subtlety enough, with a very gentle heat and few hard words: Vertues to be prais'd wherever they are found, yea even in an Enemy, and very worthy our Imitation. Yet this great Man, who so candidly represents his Adversaries, was himself most scurrilously and unworthily handl'd by his own and the Enemies of the Government. And here I must do Justice to Dr. PAYNE lately deceas'd, who, as he tells the World in his Letter to the Bishop of Rochester, was desir'd by his Grace the present Arch-bishop of Canterbury to answer

answer Mr. TOLAND; and why should not every body that thinks him in the wrong take the same liberty of writing against him, as he did to publish his Thoughts before? Now if Mr. TOLAND'S own Judgment ought to be receiv'd in this case, the Doctor has in his two Sermons said more against him than the Bishop of Worcester, Mr. NORRIS, the Anonymous Oxonian, the Author of the Occasional Paper, Mr. BEVERLY, Mr. GAILHARD, Mr. BROWNE, or any other Answerer; and yet instead of treating him like a *Dominican Inquisitor*, he uses, with some little warmth, such Grave and Christian Language as shews his Metropolitan's Judgment and Moderation in pitching upon him, as well as his own Skill and Sincerity in the management of his Trust.

" We must hold this *Mystery* of ^{Dr. Payne's} *Faith*, says Dr. PAYNE (speaking ^{Serm. P. 65, &c.} to his Auditory) with a *Christian* good Temper, and not lose that while we are contending for the other; nor let our Contentions grow so warm and intemperate, so fierce and cruel, as to forget and violate the plain

" Mo-

“Morals of Christianity, while we
 “are over earnestly disputing for the
 “Faith of it; or perhaps *only for some*
 “*false and mistaken, or at least some*
 “*useless Opinions, and over-nice and*
 “*subtle Controversies about it.* This
 “has been the fault of those who
 “have contended more for Victory
 “than Truth, and more for their own
 “Credit and Vain-glory than the
 “Christian Faith; who tho they may
 “be in the right, as ’tis ten to one
 “that they are not (*for Truth seldom*
 “*dwells with such a Spirit of Rage, and*
 “*Pride, and Passion, but rather with a*
 “*quite other Temper*) yet they great-
 “ly disserve the Cause they so un-
 “duly manage. And as they are ne-
 “ver like to convince their Adversa-
 “ries, so they give others just ground
 “to suspect that *they supply want of*
 “*better Reason and stronger Arguments*
 “*with weak and impotent Calumny,*
 “*with undecent and unbecoming Re-*
 “*flections.* This is as Criminal and
 “as Unchristian as the Error or the
 “Heresy they are so zealous against;
 “and ’tis to be doubted ’tis rather a
 “*false Fire and a hypocritical Zeal, not*
 “for

“ for the Cause of God so much as their
“ own; and that this is kindl’d not
“ from the Altar, but some other place,
“ and blown up by some private PIQUE
“ and sinister Designs, that thus blazes
“ out to such an outrageous degree as
“ to consume and destroy, not only its
“ Adversaries if it were in its power,
“ but even the most vital and sub-
“ stantial Parts of Christianity, even
“ Peace, Love, and Charity; and con-
“ tends for the Christian Faith with
“ such a most Diabolical and Unchristi-
“ an Temper. This is very far from
“ the Spirit of Christ and Christiani-
“ ty; and however precious the Faith
“ be, yet the Apostle tells us, *if we*
“ *had all Faith, and understood all Mys-*
“ *teries, and all Knowledg, yet without*
“ *Charity we are nothing*, however great
“ we may be in our own Thoughts.
“ And such a Zeal of Sowness and
“ Bitterness, as it is generally without
“ Knowledg, so it is always without Re-
“ ligion; and tho it hold the Mystery of
“ Faith (and do not rather pervert
“ and corrupt it) yet, to be sure, this
“ is not, according to the Apostle’s
“ Advice, *in a pure Conscience.*

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There needs no more to be added in this place but a sincere acknowledgment from Mr. TOLAND, that (notwithstanding any Prejudices he may be suppos'd to entertain against *Ireland*) he met there, and had the honour to be acquainted with a great many worthy Gentlemen, who by their extraordinary Parts, Education, and Vertues, merit to be distinguish'd in any Country of the World. He knows several Men and Women (and doubtless there are or should be more) who don't confine all Salvation to the narrow Limits of a *Sect*, nor mistake the affected *Phrases* of any Party for the only true *Christianity*: who neither hate nor despise others for differing from them in *Opinion*, no more than in Features or Complexion; knowing that no body can believe as he pleases, and it were the highest Injustice to expect a Man should profess with his Mouth what in his Heart he detests: Persons who can live easily with all Men, as being of one Race, and fellow-Citizens of the same World; not denying any body the liberty of improving the Hap-

Happiness of the *Society* by his Invention, Learning, Industry, or Example: And who, in a word, are not willing to deprive themselves of real and certain *Advantages* for the sake of uncertain, contested, or useless *Speculations*; as if one that wants it should reject the profer'd Service of an honest and able Accountant, because he believes not a World in the Moon; or not allow an Ingenious Man's Conversation to be agreeable, for ridiculing the Fable of St. PATRICK'S Purgatory. As for the *Publick Peace*, which is pretended to be endanger'd by a TOLERATION, it has been disturb'd or subverted in all Ages and Places of the World, not either by *Conscientious* or *Enquiring* Men, but by those who no less dogmatically than tyrannically *impose* upon their Understandings; and who, in spite of all their Disguises, appear to be much more concern'd for SOVERAIGNTY than REFORMATION. 'Tis likewise clear as the Sun they were Mr. TOLAND'S Enemies that made, or continue all the needless stir about his Book, and not his Friends, who only

only acted defensively for the *Common Liberty* of Mankind, but not upon his private account. Nor does he (who, one would think, should know it best) believe any Persons in *Ireland* or elsewhere favour'd him a jot the more for writing that *Treatise*; and if they did, he was never yet inform'd of this accessory Kindness either by themselves, or others by their Deputation: neither does he make returns of Love or Respect to any body living upon this meer Consideration.

*Qui statuit aliquid, parte inaudita altera,
ÆQUUM licet statuerit, haud ÆQUUS est:*

Seneca.



FINIS.

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